

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended): An image capturing apparatus for capturing a subject comprising:

a vertical body including a front face and a back opposed to the front face;

a grip to be grasped by an operator's hand, said grip comprising at least a region of the front face and a region of the back;

a release switch provided on the front face of said body in a region other than the part of said grip;

a capturing lens provided on the back of said body in a region other than the part of said grip; ~~and~~

an image monitor operable to display the subject, said image monitor being provided above said release switch, and

a plurality of operation switches disposed in a vicinity of said release switch and on said front face of said vertical body.

2. (Original): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said release switch is positioned substantially at a center in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of said body.

3. (Original): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said image monitor is provided on substantially the same plane as a plane on which said release switch is provided.

4. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said image monitor is attached to an upper portion of said body around an axis along a longitudinal direction of said body.

5. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus for capturing a subject, comprising:
a vertical camera body having a front face and a back opposed to the front face; and
a case, having a front face and a back opposed to the front face, capable of covering said camera body, said case being movable only in one direction with respect to said camera body, wherein

said camera body comprises a first release switch provided on the front face thereof, a capturing lens provided on the back face thereof and an image monitor provided above said first release switch, and

said case comprises a grip to be grasped by an operator's hand and a first opening operable to allow the operator to press said first release switch, said grip comprises at least a region of the front face and a region of the back of said case, and said first opening is provided in a region other than the region of said grip.

6. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said first release switch is positioned substantially at a center in a direction perpendicular to a longitudinal direction of said camera body.

7. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said image monitor is provided on substantially the same plane as a plane on which said first release switch is provided.

8. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said image monitor is attached to an upper portion of said camera body around an axis along a longitudinal direction of said body.

9. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein
when said camera body is at a first position with respect to said case, said first release switch and said capturing lens are covered by said case, and

when said camera body is at a second position with respect to said case, said first release switch is placed in a state allowing said first release switch to be pressed and said capturing lens appears outside of said case.

10. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 9, wherein
said image monitor is covered by said case when said camera body is at said first position with respect to said case, whereas said image monitor appears outside said case when said camera body is at said second position with respect to said case.

11. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said image monitor is provided rotatably around an axis along a direction of a movement of said case with respect to said camera body.

12. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 11, wherein said image monitor is attached to an end of said camera body by a support that is rotatable around the axis along the direction of the movement of said case with respect to said camera body.

13. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said image monitor is supported so as to adjust an angle between said image monitor and said support.

14. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said camera body comprises a second release switch provided on a different face of said camera body from the face on which said first release switch is provided, and

said case comprises a second opening operable to allow said second release switch to be pressed, and said second opening being provided in a region other than the region of said grip.

15. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 14, wherein said camera body comprises a tilt sensor operable to detect a tilt of said camera body with respect to a horizontal direction to output a tilt signal indicative of said detected tilt, and

at least one of said first release switch and said second release switch is switched between an operative state and an inoperative state based on the tilt signal.

16. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said camera body comprises at least one terminal to be electrically connected to an external device, and said case comprises at least one terminal-opening at a position corresponding to the at least one terminal of said camera body.

17. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein said camera body comprises an operation switch and a case comprises a switch-opening, and the operation switch appears through said switch-opening of said case when said camera body is at said second position while the operation switch does not appear when said camera body is at said first position.

18. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 17, wherein said switch-opening comprises a switch cover having an indication of a function of the operation switch usable in one of operation modes of the image capturing apparatus, and the operation switch has another indication of a function of the operation switch usable in another operation mode of the image capturing apparatus.

19. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein a region of the front face of said camera body other than a region

having said first release switch, which appears through said first opening of said case when said camera body is at said first position, has a different color from said first release switch.

20. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising a first lock mechanism operable to lock said image monitor to a predetermined position, so that said image monitor is prevented from rotating in a such direction that said image monitor comes apart from said case when said camera body is at said first position with respect to said case.

21. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising a first lock-release mechanism operable to release the lock of said image monitor when said camera body is drawn from said case.

22. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 21, wherein said first lock mechanism is provided to said camera body and said first lock-release mechanism is provided to said case.

23. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising a second lock mechanism operable to lock said camera body to said first position with respect to said case, so that said camera body is prevented from being drawn from said case, when said camera body is at said first position.

24. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 23, further comprising a second lock-release mechanism operable to release the lock of said camera body for enabling said camera body to be drawn from said case.

25. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising a rotation mechanism operable to make said image monitor rotate in a such direction that said image monitor comes apart from said case, when said camera body is drawn from said case.

26. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the rotation mechanism comprises a forcing means operable to force said image monitor to come apart from said case.

27. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 25, wherein the rotation mechanism comprises a motor operable to make said image monitor rotate in the direction such that said image monitor comes apart from said case.

28. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising:

a first lock mechanism operable to lock said image monitor to a predetermined position whereby preventing said image monitor from rotating in a such direction that said image monitor comes

apart from said case when said camera body is at said first position with respect to said case; and

a second lock mechanism operable to lock said camera body to said first position with respect to said case whereby preventing said camera body being drawn from said case when said camera body is at said first position,

wherein said camera body comprises:

a first detector operable to detect whether or not said image monitor is locked to the predetermined position; and

a second detector operable to detect whether or not said camera body is at said first position of said case.

29. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 28, wherein the image capturing apparatus is operable inat least one operation mode including a playback mode that is selected when said first detector detects that said image monitor unit is not locked to the

predetermined position while said second detector detects that said camera body is at said first position with respect to said case.

30. (Withdrawn): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 28, wherein the image capturing apparatus is operable in at least one operation mode including a shooting mode, the shooting mode being selected when said first detector detects that said image monitor unit is not locked at the predetermined position while said second detector detects that said camera body is not accommodated at said first position.

31. (New): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said plurality of operation switches is disposed at an upper half-region of the vertical body.

32. (New): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said release switch is disposed at an upper half-region of the vertical body.

33. (New): An image capturing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said image monitor is disposed farther from said grip than said plurality of operation switches.

34 (New). An image capturing apparatus according to claim 1, said plurality of operation switches is disposed within an area to which a user's thumb is reachable when the user grasps said grip.